

INSTITUTE FOR TRANSURANIUM ELEMENTS

NUCLEONICA MAINTENANCE KICK-OFF MEETING - MINUTES

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Meeting date and place

9th March 2009

9:00 – 18:00

Bilbomática - Bilbao

Attendees	Unit/Company	Ref
Joseph MAGILL	ITU	JM
Raymond DREHER	ITU	RD
Carlos García	Bilbomática	CG
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1 OVERALL REVIEW OF NUCLEONICA AND IDENTIFICATION OF MOST URGENT ISSUES

JM presents the main sections of the application, including scientific calculation tools, the wiki and the collaborative area. Knowledge management is a key issue and must be enhanced. Nucleonica is based on the principle of “learn by doing”.

JM highlights some of the main inefficiencies which are in the present system, discussing with the other meeting attendants:

- User access (specifically permissions management) could be improved.
- Networking functionality should also. Facebook may be a model to follow.
- Wiki is a separate application (both functionally and technically). This causes confusion.
- The system should avoid frequent access to server, by enriching the client. Some pages are already improved in this sense.
- A good future functionality could be the “science pipes” where scientists could chain calculations, as in a batch process, without requiring programming.
- Navigation sometimes is a bit confusing. It could be improved.

- Access to the administration main options takes 5 minutes to load. This has to be solved with top priority.
- Users management could be improved with search criteria, or a default filter for number of users to be shown in the list.
- Users editing show some problems when managing not usual chars (multilingual).
- Another urgent issue: change in the domain name (joker.com service should be used).
- Browser compatibility is not fully complied in all pages.
- The application must change its philosophy, avoiding access to server and pushing rich clients.

2 Technical description of the application components

RD explains the way the software components and code are structured and usual technical tasks. Some problems are identified, as the lack of space in one disk drive. A first set of tasks for the preparation of the environment at Bilbomática are also agreed:

- Bilbomática should prepare a test environment, where updates in progress can be remotely accessed and checked by ITU, for its acceptance before putting the system in production
- Coding will be shared between Bilbomática and ITU. Bilbomática will propose a configuration management tool (Subversion, Sourcesafe). The source code should preferably be at Bilbomática servers (within company's back-up policies), but accessed for development tasks by ITU must be guaranteed, making possible to perform software coding in parallel with no interference between the two parties.
- Present wiki blogs are useful for ITU to show relevant information concerning the state of the system in a simple way. There is a deployment blog which could be kept to communicate the deployed system versions. Bilbomática could create a blog in the wiki for its activities.
- Other installation issues could be covered, e.g.: recovery procedures in case of hardware / software failure, back-ups, contingency plans, possibility of server vitalizing, cleaning of temporary files.

3 Review of improvements suggested in the offer

- **Single Search tool.** Very interesting possible improvement.

- **Web 2.0 services.** It must be considered, in the context of pushing the knowledge management aspect of the system. Present forum could be improved. It is not very highly used.
- **Error management.** To be studied as a possibility
- **Silverlight and Flash for graphics.** Present graphics, based on javascript or java applets work correctly, but Silverlight and Flash are much more state-of-the-art technologies. Bilbomática recommends studying their use for future developments, as well as a possible integration with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technologies.
- **AJAX.** We have to be careful, as some experience in the system did not produce the expected results.
- **Dundas chart controls.** Scientific graphics require very specific features, which are not guaranteed to be covered by Dundas. In any case it could be studied in the future, as some aspects as the toolbar or the generation of 3-D graphics are interesting.
- **Align the wiki with the technologies of the application.** This should imply the change in the wiki. We could start trying out with some pages or new sections.
- **Standardized navigation.** Navigation should be improved. Menus are not always consistent (e.g. options which are only accessible from the site map).
- **Content Management System.** It may be useful in the future, but it is not a priority.

4 Contractual management of the technical tasks

OF raises the level of ceremony we need to manage the requests. According to the contract, tasks would require a formal request by ITU, estimation and the signature of a specific agreement.

JM addresses it is not necessary that level of detail. Nevertheless ITU requires a good level of visibility of the progress and the time the technical tasks are requiring.

OF proposes the approval workflow of the contract is followed, but with more simple communication methods. A proposed procedure may be:

1. The ITU sends by e-mail a request for tasks.
2. Bilbomática includes the requests in a Request Management File (an excel sheet), estimates the required effort and communicates it to ITU.
3. ITU approves the tasks, provided the required effort.
4. Bilbomática carries out the work and delivers it for approval.
5. ITU accepts the requests, so they can be invoiced.

6. For very small tasks (less than 8 hours) no estimation may be needed.
7. The Request Management File will reflect the state of all the tasks: those requested, estimated, in progress, pending of acceptance, accepted.

The preparation of a **template for the Request Management File** (excel format) and the **description of the already identified initial tasks** (preparation of environment and most urgent issues) are defined as first **action points** to be carried out by Bilbomática.